1: Roth--2 (No date) 1890 Tasmanians
116, 726, 177, 161

"The first aborigine killed was shot by one of Marion's party during a misunderstanding, and we have no record of any further fatal meeting between the aborigines and Europeans until 1804, about twelve months after the first European settlement was formed. On this occasion a panic seemed to have seized the English, who shot down unmercifully a party of aboriginal men, women, and children, which was approaching them with every sign of friendship. In 1828 the hostilities caused by this episode had reached such a pitch that the colonists were nearly driven out of the island; but the natives, never very numerous, were already rapidly decreasing in numbers, when, in 1835, the Black War came to an end by the unconditional surrender of a few hundred of the aborigines. This wretched remnant, collected together by an energetic man named Robinson, was transferred to Flinders Island. But change of circumstances, and more especially unsuitable food, told woefully on their numbers, and when, twelve years later, these were reduced to something over forty, they were transferred to Oyster Cove, near Hobart. Here in March, 1869, William Lanney, the last Tasmanian male aborigine, died, and with the death in June, 1876, of the woman Truganina, or Lalla Rookh, the race was wiped off the face of the earth."

"This holding of the upper limbs in this peculiar fashion may perhaps have something to do in connection with their method of carrying their spears by their toes so as to appear quite unarmed, for we read (Meredith, p. 195), 'The aborigines, when they wished to appear unarmed, had a habit of walking without any weapon in their hands, but very adroitly trailing their spears, which they held fast by their toes, along the ground after them, to be picked up at any moment they were required;' and Davies says, 'If the ground is smooth upon which they are walking, as a beach for instance, they have a habit of trailing their spears after them, the point held in some manner between their great toe and that next it; this seems to be that they may have their waddy ready to heave at any small object that may appear. The spear is transferred from the foot to the hand in an instant.' It would appear that this stealthy carrying of arms is a warlike precaution, for Calder (pp. 21-22) says:'The Tasmanian aboriginal, in advancing on a victim whom he meant to kill, treacherously approached ... with his hands clasped and resting on the top of his head, a favourite posture of the black; ... but all the time he was dragging a spear behind him, held between his toes, in a manner that must have taken long to acquire. Then by a motion as unexpected as it was rapid, it was transferred to the hand, and the victim pierced before he could lift a hand or stir a step.' The first white man, George Munday, who was killed by an aborigine, fell a victim to this practice; for, as Knopwood relates (p. 53), 'the native had a spear concealed, and held by his toes, and as Munday turned from him, he caught up his spear and threw it at him.'"

1: Roth--19 (No date) 1890 Tasmanians
116, 516, 726

"West states (pp. 81-2) that the member of the tribe who had committed an offence 'had to stand while a certain number of spear were thrown at him,' but that, 'the keenness of his eye, and agility of his motions, usually enabled him to escape a fatal wound,' and Calder (p. 60) describes similar agility when alluding to the inter-tribal wars in which they engaged. These fights, he says, 'often lasted for hours, but such was the dexterity of the savage in evading the spears of his adversaries that they seldon struck him. Without moving an inch from his post, he would avoid a discharge of three or four well-directed spears sent at him at the same instant. By a contortion of his body, a movement of his head to the right or left, or raising his leg or arm, he seldom failed escaping them all, any one of which would have transfixed the less agile European with the most perfect certainty.'"

1: Roth--82 (No date) 1890 Tasmanians
116, 411, 726

"Of the spear Calder says (Journ. p. 21): It 'was thrown from the hand only, with great force and precision, having a range of, I believe, about sixty or seventy yards,' and of the waddy, 'It was held by the thinner end and was used either as a club or missle. Used for the latter purpose, it was hurled with awful force and certain aim.' According to the anonymous author in the Van Diemen's Annual (1834, p. 78): 'They are so extremely dexterous in the use of the spear, as seldom to miss a mark, even at a considerable distance; and in managing their waddies also, they display great skill and prowess,' while Melville (pp. 347-9) speaks as follows: 'They were extremely dexterous in the use of the spear; in throwing these to a considerable distance, or in using them when spearing fish in the water, they seldom missed the object aimed at,' and of their waddies: 'These they would throw with considerable force and extraordinary dexterity.' 'In throwing the spear they are very expert' (Widowson, p. 190). 'A shower of their spears, which they send through the air with a quivering motion, would be terribly destructive' (Backhouse, p. 172)."

1: Roth--82 [2] (No date) 1890 Tasmanians
116, 411, 726

"Mr. Meredith, in describing the murder of one of his father's stockmen, named Gay, by the blacks, says: 'About four hundred yards from the hut was a creek, in which the body of Gay was found, covered over with sticks; on being drawn out, many spear wounds were discovered, and one spear remained in one of the feet, having been driven through his thick boot-sole into the foot; but for this one spear, he might probably have escaped, being a very swift runner, and this fatal weapon must have struck him when flying at full speed from his murderers' (Home in Tasmania, p. 204). Ross mentions (p. 151), that on one occasion one of the stock-keepers was pursued by a party of natives, who 'struck him as he ran with five or six spears,' three of which 'had struck him in the back,' and 'one especially had penetrated his loins several inches.'"

116, 609, 619, 726

"The following account by Calder, compiled from the sources already mentioned, gives the best conception of the [88] methods and tactics adopted by the aborigines in their final struggle with the Europeans. This account appears in the Journ. Anth. Inst. 1873, pp. 7-11, and we supplement it by important extracts from other sources. 'Tribal dissensions, causing mutual destruction (for such were their jealousies and hatreds, that they fought one another all the time they were thrashing the whites), contributed to their decrease in some degree.... Beyond all doubt, they [the settlers] were no match for the blacks in bush-fighting, either in defensive or offensive operations.... If it had been possible to bring the savage into fair and open fighting with something like equal numbers, this would have been reversed. But the black assailant was far too acute and crafty an enemy to be betrayed into this style of contest, and never fought till he knew he had his opponents at a disadvantage to themselves. He waited and watched for his opportunity for hours, and often for days, and when the proper moment arrived, he attacked the solitary hut of the stock-keeper, or the hapless traveller whom he met in the bush, with irresistable numbers, taking life generally singly, but often; the largest number I read of his destroying on one occasion being four persons. In these assaults on the dwellings of his enemy he contrived his attacks so cleverly as to insure success at least five times in six, and if forced to abandon his enterprise, his retreat, with few exceptions, was a

bloodless one. The natives so managed their advance on the point of attack as not to be seen until they were almost close to the dwelling of their victim. They distinguished between a house and a hut, and seldom approached the former.... They never attacked except in parties of twenty, fifty, a hundred, or even greater numbers. Their mode of assaulting a dwelling when there were several inmates at home, which they knew by previous watching, was to divide into small gangs of five, ten, or more, each concealing itself,... their approach being so quiet as to create no suspicion of their presence, to which the woody and uneven nature of the country is eminently favourable. Then one of these parties, which was prepared for instant retreat, made its presence known, either by setting fire to some shed or bush fence, or by sending a flight of spears in at the window, shouting their well-known war-whoop at the same time. This never failed of bringing out the occupants, who, seeing the authors of the outrage, now at a safe distance, but in an attitude of defiance, incautiously pursued them.... The blacks then retreated just as quickly as the others advanced, keeping out of gunshot, and [89] defying them, generally in good English, to come on.... Having decoyed their pursuers to a safe distance into the woods, and generally with rising ground between them and the hut, the others sprang from their cover, and rushing into the place, plundered it of its contents, often finishing their work by burning it to its foundations; first, however, killing or leaving for dead, any unfortunate persons--mostly a mother and her children--who

chanced to be left behind. They then fled with their booty, reuniting with the decoy party at some distant point. In their first systematized assaults... their principal object was murder, but in later times, plunder.... They took everything that was useful, and often what was of no use at all to them,... such, for example, as clocks, workboxes, etc .... But provisions of all sorts, and, above all, blankets, firearms, and ammunition, were the articles they prized most; of which latter they eventually surrendered many stand to the Government, pistols, muskets, fowling-pieces, powder and ball, all perfectly clean and dry, and in excellen order. Of these latter it was found that they knew not only the use, but were also practised in using them; but there is no instance of their bringing them into the field, though they afterwards assured Mr. Robinson that they meant to have done so, but to the last they seem to have preferred their own arms in both fight and chase--namely, the spear and waddy.... Notwithstanding the ancient customs of the blacks, not to permit the women to take any part in active war, these individuals could not be restrained from joining in and sometimes leading the attack. One of these persons, ... a woman of one of the East Coast tribes, ... planned and executed nearly every outrage that was committed in the districts bordering on the north and northwestern coast. In the days of their decay, she collected the poor remnants of several tribes into one hostile band, of whom she was the leader and chieftainess.'"

1: Roth--89-90 (No date) 1890 Tasmanians
116, 726

"On p. 20, ibid., Calder continues: 'They never permitted their wives or children to accompany them in their war expeditions, either against the whites or enemies of their own race, but left them in places of security or concealment,' and on pp. 21-22, ibid.: 'The Tasmanian aboriginal, in advancing on an unsuspecting victim whom he meant to kill treacherously, approached apparently quite unarmed, with his hands clasped, and resting on the top of his head, a favourite posture of the black, and with no appearance of a hostile intention. But all the time he was dragging a spear behind him, held between his toes, in a manner that must have taken long to acquire. Then, by a motion as unexpected as it was rapid, it was transferred to the hand, and the victim pierced before he could lift a hand or stir a step.'"

"Regarding these surprise tactics, in a long account of the hostilities carried on between the natives and a man named Thomas Tucker, Calder (Wars, pp. 99-100) narrates the following: 'The Cape Portland tribe were still here, though not close to the harbour. But as day advanced some indications of their approach, which no European would observe, reached the ears of the black woman [an ally with Tucker]; but she said nothing..... The land, all along the north-eastern shores, is very open, so that with the commonest vigilance there was no danger of any sudden surprise. All at once, however, the woman started and whispered to Tucker, "Here are the black fellows," pointing at them at the same time. He looked round just in time to see the head of one of them peering at them over a low rise, which was withdrawn directly, and not a vestige of the hundreds who were creeping stealthily on them, to surround them, was to be seen. Our natives managed their attacking movements with uncommon skill, and hundreds are the instances of their surrounding dwellings, in perfect swarms, without their exciting the smallest suspicion of their being at hand. No more subtle race could be than the Tasmanian savages.'"

"'In several instances, the lives of white people were saved by the native women, who would often steal away from the tribe to give notice of an intended attack. On one occasion, one of our boat's crew had landed for the night on the shore of Great Swan Port, made their preparations for supper, and lighted a fire, when two native women came stealthily to them, warning them to hurry away, as the tribe was hidden behind the nearest bank, only waiting till the moon rose to make a descent upon them. Accordingly, the men hastily gathered up their paraphernalia, and decamped to their boat, but had scarcely pushed out into deep water before they saw the enemy come stealing down, one black figure after another gliding past their fire, evidently with the intention of surrounding them' (Meredith, p. 201)."

"Laplace's accounts run to the same tune: 'When the dwelling which they desire to ransack appears to them too large, or too well guarded to be attacked by the ordinary means, that is, by surprise, or violent force favoured by the darkness, then they employ a patience and a cunning truly diabolical.... The farmer, in spite of his restless vigilance, often passes close to [91] the trunks of trees without perceiving the savages, who now, drawn back against the branches blackened by the flames, or now, imitating by their attitude and perfect immobility those which the axe has cut off, await, often during whole days, the moment when he sets out, with all his convicts, to work in the fields. Hardly has he gone away, before they surround his farm, massacre his wife and children without pity, and have already conveyed their booty far away, when the flames, rushing above the buildings, foretell to the unfortunate colonist the extent of his misfortune. The aborigines do not wait always to shed the blood of Europeans till a project for ravaging some house has brought them together. Often one among them approaches inhabited places alone, glides along the palisades protecting the houses, till just by the lower room where the family of the proprietor is assembled. In an instant, his body is pierced by a spear, and his wife, as well as the child which she held to her breast, fell also, stricken dead by an invisible hand. The bloodthirsty savage, having satisfied his cruelty, disappears

into the woods, and rejoins his tribe.... A convict, employed in guarding flocks, whose barbarity the natives had experienced more than once, was traversing the forest with a companion. He encountered a native, who, hidden behind the trees, threw a spear at him; missed him, and took to flight. The convict, exasperated, pursued and overtook him, and, after an obstinate struggle the Van Diemen's Lander, his head fractured by the blows of the club, was left for dead upon the ground; but hardly had the victor taken a few steps, before his victim raised himself, armed himself with a new spear, pierced with it the heart of his enemy, and disappeared into the thickest part of the wood' (Laplace, III. ch. xviii. pp. 197-199). 'The blacks, when they came in secret to attack a hut, always did so by ambuscade, watching whole days and nights together for an opportunity to pounce upon their prey. And even should they approach openly, with a hostile intention, they still did so under the cloak of friendship, coming up from different sides, and dragging their long spears, held between their toes, unperceived, through the grass, so as to have those deadly weapons ready at a moment's warning to dart upon their victim' (Ross, p. 87)."

1: Roth--91-92 (No date) 1890 Tasmanians
116, 726

"In the case of the massacre of the Hooper family: 'A black woman some time after told the whole of their plans and schemes to achieve this terrible murder: she said that a party of them had for three days kept watch unseen on one of the rocky hills close to [92] the cottage, intending to wait there until Hooper went out to work without his gun.... One unhappy day he did go out without it, and instantly the descent was made and the massacre effected with the terrible success they anticipated' (Meredith, ch. xii. p. 212)."

"The first white man who was murdered by the natives was George Munday: 'The native had a spear concealed and held by his toes, and, as Munday turned from him, he caught up his spear and threw it at him' (Knopwood, p. 53; Parker, p. 28). This cunning is well summed up in Colonel Arthur's Despatch (Colonies and Slaves, p. 61): 'Although their [the natives] natural timidity still prevents them from openly attacking even two armed persons, however great their number, yet they will, with a patience quite inexhaustible, watch a cottage or a field for days together, until the unsuspecting inhabitants afford some opening, of which the savages instantly avail themselves, and suddenly spear to death the defenceless victims of their indiscriminate vengeance.... Two Europeans who will face them will drive fifty savages before them, but still they return and watch until their unerring spears can bring some victim to the ground,' and further, in Minutes Exec. Council (ibid. p. 63): 'The Council cannot but remember the repeated proofs it has had before it of the skill with which the natives have availed themselves of the facilities presented to them ... to make their hostile approaches unperceived, of their patience in watching for days the habitation of those whom they design to attack, and of the frightful celerity with which they avail themselves of any unguarded moment to fall upon the inmates and put them to a cruel death; nor can it forget those instances in which they have effected their purpose by means of the most consummate and deliberate treachery, by sending some of their people, sometimes women, sometimes unarmed men, who have

approached huts with apparently the most friendly disposition, and have succeeded in engaging the attention of the inmates, or in alluring some of them to a distance, and thus enabling their armed confederates to fall suddenly upon their unsuspecting victims and destroy them.' 'The facility and rapidity with which they moved to some secret hiding-place, after committing any atrocity, rendered pursuit in most instances fruitless' (Memorandum, ibid. p. 72)."

1: Roth--92-93 (No date) 1890 Tasmanians
116, 726

"Against this, what may be called the silent system of attack, there are a few records of a party of natives declaring open hostility. In narrating one of his pursuits of the hostile aborigines, Robinson says: '"The wild natives had assembled on the opposite [93] bank of the river. Here they continued to exhibit the most violent gestures, and were exceedingly boisterous in their declamations, threatening to cross the river and massacre us." Robinson also learned that it was their intention to have killed the whole of the party except the women. But for himself was reserved a special fate, namely, the mutilation and burning of his body, "and my ashes," he says, "made into Ray-dee or Num-re-mur-he-kee," i. e. amulets to be worn by the natives' (Calder, Wars, p. 70). The natives invariably run away if one man be shot; an instance of this happened at the Coal River; the body was left, but a wounded man was taken away (Hobbs, p. 50). In their mode of warfare, 'Parties in pursuit can only come upon them in the morning by watching their smokes; they leave their women and children behind them, when they go upon their plundering excursions; they are more shy and difficult to come up with than the kangaroo' (Hobbs, p. 50)."

"On one occasion Robertson was within four miles of them for four days near the Blue Hills; they beat round and round him like a hare; he had natives with him, who had been captured, to trace them, and whom he could trust. In July he was upon the track of from 100 to 200 natives at the Blue Hills; he supposed there were two tribes, one party going towards Oyster Bay, the other towards the westward; the party he followed to the westward suddenly disappeared, and he did not know by what means they hid their tracks. He continues: 'They cannot be surrounded by several parties coming upon them; they have no rendezvous except where game is plentiful; they go over the whole island; they always keep regular sentries, and pass over the most dangerous grounds, and by the brinks of the most dangerous precipices; they leave their women and children behind them, and send out parties to commit depredations;... the natives do not move by night; they are afraid of the moon' (p. 47). West, the historian, gives the following accounts of hostile encounters with the natives: 'In the estimation of Europeans their practice in war was savage or cowardly; "they do not, like an Englishman," complained a colonial writer, "give notice before they strike." The perfection of war, in their esteem, was ambush and surprise; but an intelligent observer sometimes saw considerable cleverness in their tactics. Mr. Franks was on horseback, driving cattle homeward; he saw eight blacks forming a line behind him, to prevent his retreat, each with an uplifted spear,

beside a bundle in the left hand. They then dropped on one knee, still holding the weapon in [94] menace; then they rose and rantowards him in exact order; while they distracted his attention by their evolutions, other blacks gathered from all quarters, and within thirty yards a savage stood with his spear quivering in the air. This weapon, ten feet long, penetrated the flap of the saddle, and the flesh of the horse four inches, which dropped on his hind quarters. The rider was in despair; but the spear fell, and the animal recovered his feet and fled. The servant, less fortunate than his master, was found some days after, slain. The attack was well planned, and exhibited all the elements of military science."

1: Roth--94 (No date) 1890 Tasmanians
116. 726

"A tribe, who attacked the premises of Mr. Jones, in 1819, at the Macquarie, were led by a chief six [sic] feet high; he carried one spear, of a peculiar form, and no other kind of weapon; this he did not use, but stood aloof from the rest, and issued his orders with great calmness, which were implicitly obeyed. They formed themselves into a half moon ring, and attacked the English with great vigour. The chief was shot; they were struck with dismay, and endeavoured to make him stand; "they made a frightful noise, looked up to heaven, and smote their breasts."' West also relates: 'A party, under Major Grey, went out in pursuit; overtook a few blacks; one was siezed; but was so smeared with grease, that he slipped through the hands of his captors.... They were bold and warlike in their carriage, and when exhibiting spear exercise, commanded the admiration of the spectator.'"